

## Message Text

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14  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

TRSE-00 SSM-03 ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-07 SAM-01 EUR-12 /101 W  
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P R 300510Z NOV 76  
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6757  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABASDHABI  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY TSNAME  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
QMEMBASSY TEHRAN 3623  
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 5591

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, KU, IRJH IZ, MU  
SUBJ: GULF FONMIN CONFERENCE: GOK OUTWARDLY SERENE AT FAILURE,  
BUT APPARENTLY BLAMES IRAQ  
REF: KUWAIT 5508

1. SUMMARY: THE OFFICIAL KUWAITI LINE IS THAT THE GULF FONMIN MEETING IN MUSCAT (NOV 25-26) WAS WORTHWHILE. THERE IS HOWEVER, ONE EARLY INDICATION THAT THE GOK BLAMES IRAQ FOR DASHING KUWAITI HOPES FOR MOVEMENT TOWARD A SOLUTION TO THEIR FRONTIER DISPUTE, IN THE CONTEXT OF GULF-WIDE AGREEMENT ON BOUNDARIES OR TERRITORY. THE CONFERENCE MAY HAVE INCREASED IRAQI-KUWAIT TENSIONS ON THIS SCORE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE OFFICIAL KUWAITI LINE ON THE UNPRODUCTIVE GULF FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN MUSCAT GOES SOMETHING LIKE THIS: THE CONFERENCE WAS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING FOR LACK OF CONCRETE RESULTS, BUT THE HOLDING OF A CONFERENCE WAS FULLY JUSTIFIED  
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BECAUSE THE GULF FONMINS SHOULD MEET PERIODICALLY AND HAD NOT

DONE SO RECENTLY. IN ANY EVENT, A SERIES OF BILATERAL CONTACTS WILL NOW BEGIN WHICH WILL IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE FOR SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS, THOUGH NO DATE FOR A FUTURE MEETING IS SET. (THE FORGOING WAS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE KUWAITI FONMIN'S REMARKS TO THE PRESS UPON RETURNING FROM MUSCAT NOVEMBER 26. SINCE THEN, KUWAITI NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS HAVE TAKEN UP THIS OPTIMISTIC LINE, ASSERTING THAT CONFERENCE'S FAILURE TO AGREE ON ANY COLLECTIVE ACTION WHATSOEVER WILL RETARD DEVELOPMENT OF BROAD GULF COOPERATION BUT WILL NOT STOP IT.)

3. WE MAY, HOWEVER, BE SEEING AN ANTI-IRAQ REACTION IN KUWAIT, OVER IRAQ'S ROLE AT THE CONFERENCE. KUWAIT DAILY AL ANBA OF NOVEMBER 28, PRINTS A PURPORTED PHOTOCOPY OF SUBSTANCE OF FIVE-PART OMANI WORKING PAPER REPORTEDLY TABLED AT CONFERENCE. ACCOMPANYING NEWS ANALYSIS, REPORTEDLY BASED ON PHOTOCOPY AND "SECRET MINUTES" OF CONFERENCE, ASSERTS THAT PAPER WAS CENTRAL DOCUMENT OF CONFERENCE AND CONCLUDES THAT IN RETROSPECT IT WAS REMARKABLE THE CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT ALL, GIVEN RADICALLY DIVERGENT VIEWS OF PARTICIPANTS. ACCORDING TO AL ANBA ANALYSIS, THE OMANI FIVE-PART PAPER OCCASIONED TWO FOLLOWING MAJOR OBJECTIONS FROM IRAQ:

A. GOI COULD NOT ABIDE THE SECOND PART, "CONFIRMING" TERRITORIES AND BORDERS OF GULF COUNTRIES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH "UN PRINCIPLES AND THE RULES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, AND AS REGULATED BY REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENT". (AT THIS POINT THE AL ANBA WRITER NOTES THAT KUWAIT HAS HAD A BOUNDARY AGREEMENT WITH IRAQ, WITH WHICH IRAQ REFUSES TO COMPLY "IN RESPECT TO THE DEMARCATION OF THE COUNTRY.")

B. GOI COULD NOT ACCEPT THIRD PART, CALLING FOR JOINT ORGANIZATION OF "TRAFFIC AND NAVIGATIONAL ROUTES IN THE AREA, CONSIDERED OF COLLECTIVE UTILITY, WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY OF EACH COUNTRY," ASSERTING THAT THIS VIOLATED THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE NAVIGATION IN THE GULF FOR ALL COUNTRIES.

3. AL ANBA ANALYSIS CONTINUES TO EFFECT THAT IRAQ THEN OFFERED TO SIGN AN "AMENDED" VERSION OF OMANI PAPER, ON CONDITION THAT ALL OTHER GULF COUNTRIES RENOUNCE FOREIGN BASES AND MILITARY PACTS. ANALYSIS ALSO STATES THAT IRAQ OBJECTED IN PRINCIPLE  
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TO SIGNING EVEN A WATERED DOWN PROPOSAL CALLING FOR GULF "COOPERATION TO FACE THE DANGERS THAT THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE AREA MAY BE EXPOSED TO."

4. COMMENT: (A) THIS PRESS REPORT RINGS FAIRLY TRUE, BASED ON WHAT WE KNOW OF THE VARIOUS COUNTRY POSITIONS ON GULF ISSUES. ASSUMING THAT IT IS FACTUAL, THE PUBLIC KUWAITI OPTIMISM SUMMARIZED IN PARA 2 SEEMS UNWARRANTED. MORE IMPORTANT FOR

THE SHORT TERM, HOWEVER, WILL BE THE IRAQI REACTION TO THIS NEWS STORY, STEMMING AS IT DOES FROM VIEWS WHICH THE IRAQI FONMIN ASSERTEDLY EXPRESSED AT MUSCAT. IRAQ MAY ASSUME THAT THE KUWAITI FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR FIRST LURING THE GOI TO THE MUSCAT CONFERENCE, BY REPEATEDLY ES-CHEWING A GULF SECURITY ARRANGEMENT (REFTEL), AND THEN FOR USING PRIVATELY-GIVEN IRAQI VIEWS TO ATTACK IRAQ TWO DAYS LATER IN THE CONTROLLED KUWAITI PRESS. (LOCAL JOURNALIST WHO WAS WITH KUWAITI DELEGATION AT MUSCAT, AND WHO HAS RELATED TO US A CONFERENCE SCENARIO SIMILAR TO THAT REPORTED IN AL ANBA, BELIEVES THAT FONMIN AUTHORIZED HIS MFA POLITICAL DEPARTMENT TO BRIEF AL ANBA AND OTHER NEWSMEN ON IRAQ'S SPOILER ROLE.) (B) FOR KUWAIT IT MUST BE DISCOURAGING TO SEE ITS POWERFUL NEIGHBOR REJECT AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THE AREA'S BORDER PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY AT A TIME WHEN ITS OWN BORDER DISPUTE WITH THAT NEIGHBOR IS SIMMERING. THECOUNTER HERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TO EXPOSE IRAQI INTRAN-SIGENCE IN THE HOPE THAT EXPOSURE WILL SOMEHOW MODIFY IT. SUTHERLAND

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